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PRESS RELEASE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE PROVIDES PLEA BARGAINING TRAINING

DHAKA, JUNE 19– From June 17-19, 2013, a team of two prosecutors from the U.S. Department of Justice and a senior U.S. judge provided plea bargain training for 25 judges, 10 prosecutors & 5 defense attorneys. Bangladesh's Judicial Administration Training Institute (JATI) co-sponsored the program. The Plea Bargaining Training Program supports the U.S Embassy's commitment to enhancing the rule of law in Bangladesh and the U.S. Department of Justice's continuing efforts to provide technical assistance and skills development to judges, prosecutors and police in Bangladesh.

This was the first such program in Bangladesh, providing training to representatives from across the judicial spectrum. The three-day "train the trainer" program focused on introducing the basic concepts of a plea bargain system to judges and lawyers who will then conduct training for other Bangladeshi judges and lawyers through JATI. The training consisted of lectures, demonstrations, and workshops in which the participants practiced new skills and received feedback from the team of experienced visiting U.S. instructors. U.S. Senior District Court Judge George Steeh, a respected judge who was appointed to the bench by President Bill Clinton, traveled to Bangladesh to participate in the program. Law Minister Shafique Ahmed and U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Jon Danilowicz presided over the closing ceremony. In his remarks, Mr. Danilowicz emphasized the importance of the rule of law in Bangladesh, and that the introduction of a plea bargaining system would speed up the pursuit of justice on behalf of crime victims and citizens of Bangladesh, declaring that 'justice delayed is justice denied.'

The Plea Bargaining Training Program is part of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Prosecutorial Development, Assistance, and Training's (OPDAT) worldwide efforts to enhance the rule of law and the effectiveness of the justice systems in partner countries. OPDAT currently has two American prosecutors working full-time in Bangladesh to conduct training programs like this and to provide technical assistance related to Bangladesh's laws on criminal procedure, financial crimes, and terrorism.

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